

## INFORMATION SECRET REPORT


COUNTRY Lebanon

DATE DISTR.

8 December 1948

SUBJECT      Activities of Soviet Officials  
              in Lebanon

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1. Yevgeni Podvigin 2nd Secretary of the Soviet Legation in Beirut, was reported in early November 1948 to have been in the Soviet Union for about a month and a half. This Soviet official is said to be treated with deference even by Viktor Khangulov, now Charge d'Affaires at the Beirut Legation. [REDACTED] Comment. It may be significant that the trip of Podvigin to the USSR coincided with that of Minister Daniel Solod.}

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2. Vladimir Ivanov is definitely considered as Press Attache' at the Soviet Legation in Beirut. According to source, Ivanov directs the Soviet News Bulletin which is edited by Ra'if Khuri, Mustafa 'Aris, and Fu'ad Qazan.

3. Fyodot Pissarenko and Aleksandr Sergeyev, Soviet Attachés, are very much interested in the current internal dispute in the Greek Catholic Church. At Sergeyev's request, Dikran Tosbath of the Beirut daily newspaper, Le Soir, and Tawfiq Wahbah of Dunya collect information on this subject.
- 6a Comment. The interest of these Soviet officials in this dispute may have some connection with Archbishop Ilya Karam's attempt to exploit the discontent of the Greek Catholics and perhaps to win some of them back to the Orthodox fold. Karam sent Archimandrite Jammal, who was formerly a Greek Catholic, to make overtures to two of the leading malcontents, Afif Sawaya and Yusuf Ilyas Riyashi.)

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4. Zayn-al-Din Hasanov, who acts as liaison between the Soviet Legation and Communist groups in Lebanon, returned to Lebanon in mid-October 1948 on a ship bringing pilgrims from Mecca, where he had gone, via Egypt. Hasanov left quarantine under an assumed name, as a Turk from Malatiya. He was accompanied by Zilfakanli Ahmad, a notorious Turk who worked as an intelligence agent for the Germans during World War II, and who is now employed by the Soviet Intelligence Service. The Lebanese Surete, source states, did not realize the real identities of Hasanov and Ahmad until a day or two after they had left quarantine.

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